

DA 8-63056  
CA 1

DA 20

- 2003

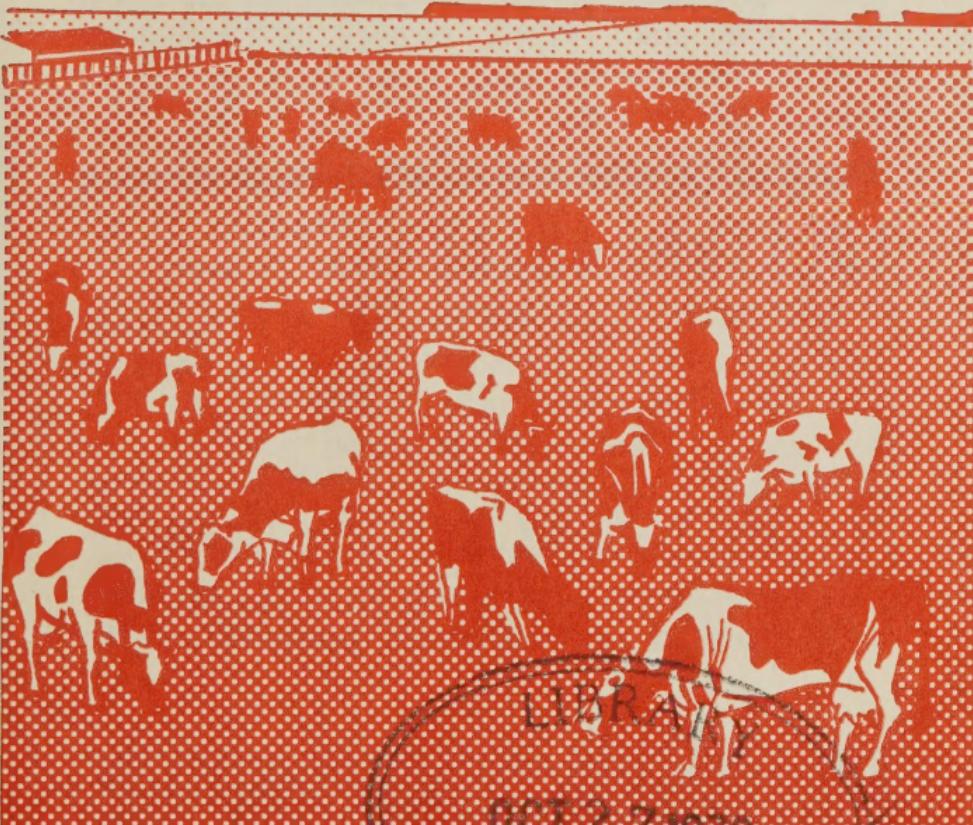
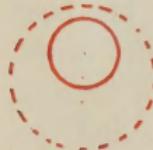
Government  
Publications

LIBRARY MATERIAL

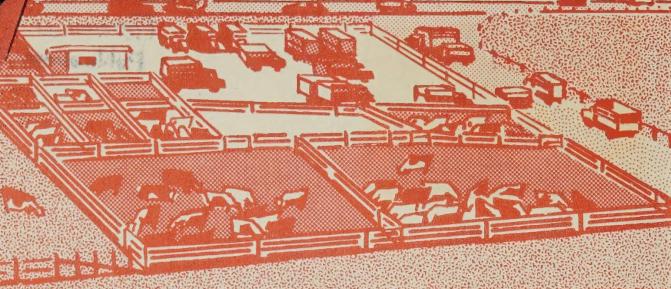
# MUNITY PASTURES

— PFRA

[General publications]



Prairie farms rehabilitation  
= administration



## COMMUNITY PASTURES

One of the greatest challenges to face prairie agriculture since the time of early settlement, has been the problem of how to deal with submarginal lands. Many areas scattered through the length and breadth of the three prairie provinces have been classed, for reason of climate or soil, as submarginal for cereal crop production. PFRA, through its Community Pasture Program, is using these lands to provide pasture for livestock.

## LOOKING AHEAD

The initial policies and programs of PFRA have helped solve some of the more basic land-use problems that confronted prairie agriculture in the past. But new economic and social influences point to even greater and more extensive land-use development in the future. Two major factors have brought this about:

1. A rapidly expanding beef cattle population on farms in the three prairie provinces and the



urgent need for more and better pastures to take care of this growth.

2. The continuing need for adjustment in use of land that is marginal or of low productivity for the purpose of improving the income and living standards of farmers presently residing in such areas.

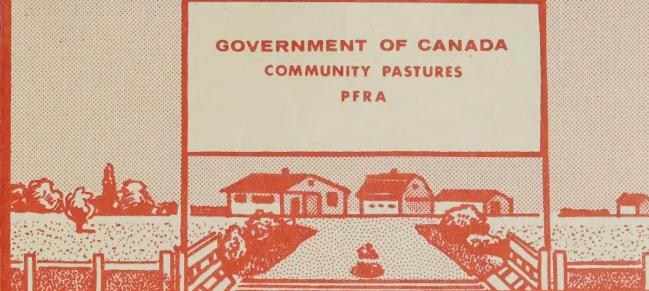
With these objectives in mind, PFRA has pressed forward on an expanded program of community pasture development and improvement. This applies to projects authorized under authority of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act and provincial schemes im-

## HISTORY

In many instances, during the initial stages of settlement and agricultural development of the country, submarginal lands were farmed and later abandoned. Soil drifting assumed major proportions on them. In addition, social services and public improvements which had been provided at the outset on a substantial scale, were subsequently found to be in excess of requirements due to land abandonment. This imposed a heavy tax burden on the farmers remaining in the area. Those who were fortunate to settle in more favorable locations were able, for the most part, to eventually establish farm homes and provide a reasonable standard of living for their families. However, those who settled in the less productive areas, although contributing to the overall production of the prairies, found themselves able to remain on their farms only by curtailing expenses and accepting a reduced standard of living.

This precarious situation, both in terms of land and people, was generally recognized by governments and farm organizations for many years. It was not until the 1930's, however, when the prairies experienced the most severe and prolonged drought in their history, that the seriousness of the situation became fully apparent and positive steps were taken to remedy the situation.

Such action took several forms. Probably the most dramatic and far reaching was the program of land-use adjustment and rehabilitation of people through resettlement instituted under the leadership of the Prairie Farm



plemented on a cost-sharing basis with the Government of Canada under the new Agricultural Rehabilitation and Development Act (ARDA). During 1963, for example, 9 new community pastures are to be established under PFRA — 6 in Manitoba and 3 in Saskatchewan, enclosing an additional 300,000 acres of land for grazing purposes. Under ARDA 14 new pastures have been approved for construction in Saskatchewan and Alberta which will add another 135,000 acres to the above total.

This work is mainly going on in the parkland areas of the three prairie provinces where, by means of

#### Rehabilitation Administration in 1937.

Major objectives of this program were:

1. The permanent withdrawal of submarginal prairie land from cultivation.
2. The development of such areas for grazing purposes.
3. The resettlement on suitable farm land of farmers removed from submarginal areas.

By so doing it was recognized that while certain lands in the drought area were definitely sub-marginal from the standpoint of cereal crop production, they could, if returned to permanent grass, support a substantial livestock population. It was also envisaged that the operation of such pastures in conjunction with areas suitable for cereal crop production, would help to broaden the base of agriculture in surrounding districts and enable farmers in these areas to enjoy a higher standard of living.

As a result of action taken by PFRA, more than 2½ million acres of submarginal land have been fenced and otherwise improved for community pasture purposes in the prairie provinces. These pastures are organized into 75 separate operating units and, during 1963, will provide controlled summer grazing for 150,000 head of cattle owned by over 7,500 patrons.

faster, cheaper methods of land clearing, vast new areas for pasture development are opening up.

## POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

Initial policies governing the establishment and operation of community pastures were instituted at a time of abnormal economic and climatic conditions. These have served the agricultural industry well for the purposes intended. More recently, however, the emphasis has shifted to a program aimed at meeting the needs of an expanding livestock industry. This has meant making certain policy changes so that pastures could continue to function in the best interests of the producer.

Some of these new policy changes are being instituted in 1963. Others will be carried out more gradually over a 3-5 year period to minimize any adverse affects. The major policy change to go into effect immediately is the establishment of a 1 cent per head per day tax levy on cattle carried in community pastures. This will be collected by PFRA and turned over to the provinces for distribution to municipalities as a payment in lieu of taxes for the use of such grazing land. Also under the new policy, greater emphasis





will be given to the more equitable distribution of grazing privileges based on individual need, proximity to pasture, and past patronage. Preference will be given to breeding stock.

Other regulations applicable for the 1963-64 fiscal year, include the following:

1. Application for grazing privilege for the next grazing season to be made by November 15 of the previous year.
2. Upon receipt of a grazing permit, each patron will remit the sum of \$2 for each livestock unit authorized for admittance to the pasture. This deposit is to be paid prior to March 1, and will be credited against the patron's grazing fees.

## PASTURE OPERATIONS

Pastures are operated at cost and in accordance with all local bylaws. Each is managed by a capable stockman employed by PFRA. Before a pasture goes into operation, a public meeting is held to organize a Community Pasture Grazing Association and elect an advisory committee. The committee is authorized to act on behalf of the organization in connection with general pasture and livestock management problems.

During the grazing season many services are given in community pastures for the convenience of farmers. These include dehorning, castration, vaccination, spraying and branding. In addition, the Government of Canada provides a breeding service to improve the quality of animals in pastures. Under this program, registered bulls are purchased and developed to provide the service. Breeds used are primarily Herefords, although Aberdeen Angus, Charolais, and Shorthorn bulls are also available.

During the 1962-63 season, 1,023 PFRA bulls and



396 bulls rented from patrons, were used to service 41,000 cows.

Artificial insemination has also received considerable acceptance in community pastures. Several pastures have organized to take advantage of the superior sires available through A.I.

Livestock insurance was carried in 43 pastures in 1962, and a total of 78,735 head of stock were covered. Losses from all causes approximate  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 1 per cent in all pastures.

## PASTURE IMPROVEMENT

Lands enclosed in community pastures are reclaimed and improved for pasture purposes. Abandoned farm lands and other unproductive areas are seeded down to permanent grass cover. Watering facilities in the form of dugouts, dams, wells and springs are developed in order to fully utilize available grazing. Once the pasture has been placed in operation, grazing and pasture management policies are established on principles of good range management. This ensures the continuing productivity and maximum utilization of the resources available in the pastures.

Efforts are now being intensified to further increase the productivity of community pastures. Pasture improvement involving brush clearing, reseeding, and water development will greatly increase carrying capacity.

Since 1937, approximately 180,000 acres of PFRA community pastures have been reseeded in the long-range program to promote sound land use.

# SCHEDULE OF PASTURE RATES

## Grazing Rates

Cattle per day per head.....	.06 (including 1c. per head per day municipal tax levy)
Horses per day per head.....	.08
Sheep per mos. per head.....	.12 (provide own herder, with no charge for lambs)
Cows (breeding service).....	5.00 per head
Calves of current year, sucking with dam, born before August 1st.....	4.00 per head
Colts of current year, sucking with dam, born before August 1st.....	5.00 per head

## Minimum Grazing Fees per Head per Season

Cattle.....	5.00
Horses.....	7.00
Sheep.....	.40

No charge will be levied on colts and calves born in pasture after July 31 of current year to end of summer season.

No stock will be accepted for pasturage before May 1 of each year.

## Rates for Vaccine and Sundry Services

Blackleg, Hemorrhagic and mixed vaccines.....	.15 per single dose
Dehorning.....	.50 per head
Warble and Horn Fly Spraying (at corral).....	.15 per head
Mineral supplement.....	At cost
Castration:	
Cattle under 6 months.....	1.00 per head
Cattle 6 months and over.....	2.00 per head
Special Vaccines.....	At cost

Where extra hay or wood is available in community pastures, the following rates will apply, subject to approval of the pasture manager and confirmation from head office.

Dry wood.....	.50 per cord
Green wood.....	1.00 per cord

All hay must be put up on a share basis, such to be governed by quality and quantity available.